

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8343

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 11490

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR EG XF

SUBJECT: ARAB SUPPORT FOR SADAT

SUMMARY. DEFEATIST ATTITUDE TOWARD PEACE PROCESS APPEARS ON INCREASE AMONG MODERATE ARAB LEADERS AND COULD RESULT IN REDUCED SUPPORT TO EGYPT. WE BELIEVE REMAINDER OF 1978 IS CRITICAL CULMINATION OF U.S. PEACE EFFORTS OF LAST 4 YEARS. THE U.S. IS DOING EVERYTHING IT REALISTICALLY CAN TO BOLSTER SADAT AND IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF MODERATE ARABS DO NOT FOLLOW OUR LEAD. RECOMMEND CIRCULAR MESSAGE TO NON-REJECTIONIST ARAB CAPITALS INSTRUCTING AMBASSADORS TO REVIEW CURRENT SCENE AND URGE RENEWED SUPPORT FOR SADAT. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY HAS NOTED INCREASING NUMBER OF STATEMENTS FROM MODERATE ARAB LEADERS WHICH SUGGEST THAT PATIENCE WITH PEACE PROCESS IS WEARING THIN, EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED SADAT'S INITIATIVE. SOME SEEM TO BELIEVE IT IS ALREADY DEAD. IN WEEKS AHEAD, DURING WHICH SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS UNLIKELY, WE EXPECT THIS DEFEATISM TO GAIN GREATER CURRENCY THROUGHOUT ARAB WORLD. IT IS NOW BEING PUBLICLY PROPAGATED WITHIN EGYPT BY HAYKAL.

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2. U.S. ROLE. IN OUR VIEW, THE NEXT 8 MONTHS IS GOING TO BE THE CRITICAL PERIOD IN SADAT'S PEACE INITIATIVE. IN A SENSE, IT IS THE CULMINATION OF EVERYTHING WE HAVE WORKED FOR SINCE THE OCTOBER WAR. THE U.S. IS CERTAINLY DOING EVERYTHING IT REALISTICALLY CAN TO SUPPORT SADAT THROUGH OUR HIGHLY ACTIVE DIPLOMACY, ARMS PACKAGE, AND MAINTENANCE OF \$750 MILLION ANNUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

(WITH PROJECTED INCREASE IN GRANT ASSISTANCE FROM \$200 IN FY78 TO \$500 MILLION IN FY79). IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF DURING THESE CRUCIAL MONTHS MODERATE ARAB SUPPORT WANES AND CONTRIBUTES TO AN UNDERMINING OF SADAT'S DOMESTIC POSITION.

3. WE BELIEVE TIME IS PROPITIOUS FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO SEND CIRCULAR MESSAGE TO ALL BUT THE REJECTIONIST ARAB CAPITALS INSTRUCTING OUR AMBASSADORS TO REVIEW CURRENT STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH HOST GOVTS, GIVE THEM OUR ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL FERMENT IN ISRAEL AND URGE RENEWED SUPPORT FOR SADAT THROUGH 1978. EILTS

NOTE BY OC/T: DISSEMINATION COORDINATED WITH S/S-O, SUMMERS.

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 24 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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